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The President's Daily Brief

August 8, 1975

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

August 8, 1975

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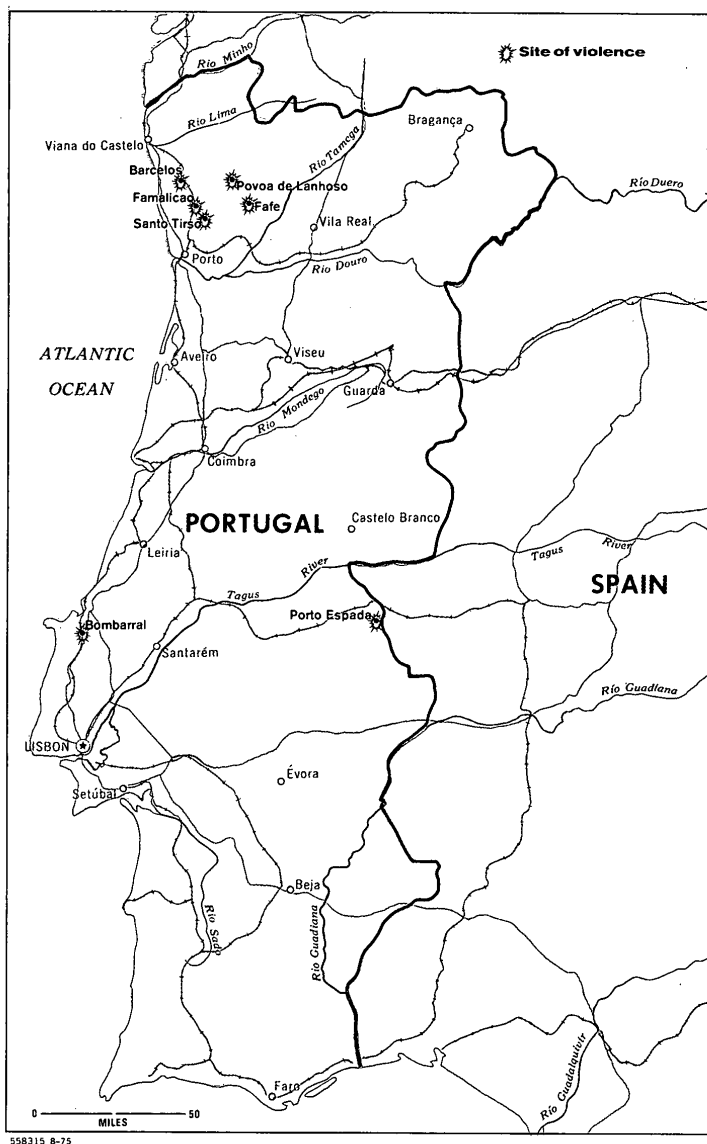
Portugal: The country's radical leaders face an increasingly rebellious population supported by some military units in the north. Meanwhile, Azorean separatists are more determined than ever to seek independence. (Page 1)

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PORTUGAL

Portugal's radical leaders are confronted with an increasingly rebellious population, whose cause is supported by some military units in the north.

Yesterday, Portuguese army units in the north openly defied orders from Lisbon to quell anti-Communist disturbances. One press report says the units presented the commander of the northern region with a petition supporting the creation of a multi-party government.

The momentum for a direct challenge of this type has been building all week. If it continues, the leaders of the ruling Armed Forces Movement will face several options:

--They can accede to the demand for a multi-party socialist state. This would be a major victory for the democratic political parties and the less radical, pro-Western faction in the Revolutionary Council.

--They can try to ignore the demands and attempt to impose a severe clampdown. Some hint of this course of action is evident in recent high-level discussions of new press censorship and austerity measures.

--They can try to consolidate their support in Lisbon and in the south--in effect cutting the dissident areas adrift--in the hope that they can avoid a major test of strength now and reimpose their influence in dissident areas later.

Because anti-Communist sentiment is increasing not only in the north but elsewhere in the country and because the discipline of military units necessary to quell a rebellion is at a low ebb, common sense would seem to dictate some concessions by radical officers and the Communists. Most press accounts, however, indicate that the Armed Forces Movement is not yet ready to give in.

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The press in Lisbon is predicting that the government that is scheduled to be sworn in today will again be led by Vasco Goncalves and that it will be made up largely of radical officers, Communists, or Communist-sympathizers. The Socialist and Popular Democratic parties reportedly will not be represented. This situation could change after internal security chief Carvalho and Army Chief of Staff Fabiao report to the Movement on their tour of the northern area and present their views on the mood of the populace.

Late reports indicate that anti-Goncalves elements are still making an effort to persuade President Costa Gomes to head off the installation of the new government, which they have publicly denounced as "manifestly incapable."

* * *

Azorean separatists are more determined than ever to seek independence from the mainland.

Leaders of the Front for the Liberation of the Azores told our embassy officials in Lisbon that they are prepared to cooperate with anti-Communists on the mainland, but do not intend to lose sight of their long-range goal of independence.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Anti-Communists on the mainland had hoped to convince the separatists to go slowly in the quest for independence because the threat of losing the Azores would be additional leverage against a Communist take-over on the mainland. The military governor of the Azores, meanwhile, claims he will not support an independence movement unless he is convinced the mainland is in Communist hands.

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TURKEY

Turkey is unlikely to put its relationship with the US back on its old footing even if the arms embargo is lifted.

Turkish commanders will probably retain the administrative command they now exercise over previously US-controlled installations, and it is possible that the Turks will charge rent and/or place the installations under a "NATO umbrella." [REDACTED]

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Opposition leader Ecevit, however, has recently ruled out either a rental arrangement or placing the bases under NATO control. In part with an eye on the upcoming senate elections, he has accused the government of not being decisive enough in its countermeasures. He also has raised questions about the continued presence of American forces in Turkey. In fact, the embargo has given impetus to those elements in Ecevit's party and in the country who advocate a nonaligned or at least a more independent policy. It is clear that Ecevit and his Republican People's Party will push for a diminution of the US role whether the embargo is lifted or not.

Demirel is also having trouble with his Salvationist Party coalition partner, Deputy Prime Minister Erbakan, who has been privately critical of the Prime Minister's handling of the retaliatory measures against the US bases; he would have preferred stronger action. [REDACTED]

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Six months after the imposition of the US arms embargo, the capabilities of the Turkish armed forces have declined to the point that Turkey would have difficulty meeting its obligations as a NATO ally.

Information is limited on the immediate effects of the embargo, due to restrictions on the access of US personnel. We do know that the air force has had the most problems; the number of aircraft grounded for repairs has increased considerably. The army is resorting to cannibalization and is reducing the use of equipment in order to keep major items operable. The navy has been the least affected. Cannibalization and Turkish manufacture of small parts, however, will not be sufficient to sustain Turkey's military capabilities much longer.

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NOTES

The North Vietnamese party daily carried an editorial yesterday strongly supporting Thai insurgency forces; the editorial is one of a series, published over the past month, that is critical of Thai foreign policy.

The North Vietnamese obviously are smarting over Bangkok's refusal to resume diplomatic discussions in Hanoi--delivered in an unusually blunt note from Foreign Minister Chatchai in late June. In addition, they are presumably suspicious of Bangkok's quick establishment of formal relations with China. The commentaries are particularly critical of Thai relations with the US, charging Bangkok with continued "collusion" and lack of sincerity in efforts to remove US military forces.

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[redacted] Soviet [redacted]

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A Soviet submarine in the Mediterranean may be in trouble.

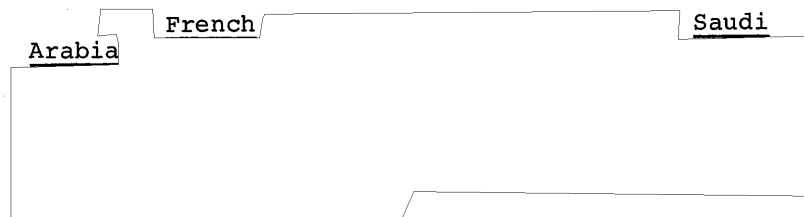
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[redacted] A US naval reconnaissance aircraft yesterday sighted an F-class submarine on the surface next to a Kashin-class ASW ship. Other ships have now reached the area and the group is moving slowly toward the Egyptian coast. We do not know the nature of the problem.

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